

## [Tom Garrett]

[Folk stuff-Rangelore?]

Phipps, Woody

Rangelore

Tarrant Co., Dist. 7 [97?]

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FEC

Tom Carrett, 52,/ negro was born on the Tandy Ranch, which was located on the [?] outskirts of Fort Worth and extended to where [Handley?], Tex. now stands. Tom was taught to ride at an early age, and was employed as a regular cowboy at the age of 10. His father, Frank Carrett had won recognition as a top cowhand, thus Tom received the best training possible, working with his father. When he was 25, he quit the Tandy Ranch to work with his father, who went to dealing in stock. His father died in 1916, and Tom went to the Triangle C Ranch, in Crosby and [Lubbock?] counties, where he was employed until he quit, at age 33. He then came to Forth Worth to pursue various other occupations, where he now resides at 1307 [?] St. His story:

"Does I know anything 'bout de old time cowboys? I'll say I does! Why, I was bo'n on a ranch just a few miles f'om whar wouns an standin' right now. I was bo'n on de Tandy Ranch, right up de crick f'om whar de big white house at Tandy Lake now am. 'Twas on November de 10th, 1885, when de ranch am so big it runs f'om somewhar in whar Poly am now, to de tudder side of whar Handley am now. In de days I'm talkin' 'bout, 'twarnt no

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houses a-tall,- just cow critters, grass an' mesquite bushes. De headquarters house am a double log house wid a hall runnin' between, an' a big rock chimney on both sides.

“[?] now, bein' a nigger kid, 'twarnt none of my business 'bout how many critters de Tandys am runnin', nor how many section 'twas in de ranch. 'Bout de most of what I can tell 'bout, am de wo'kin' and what de cow punchers done. I can't tell you 'bout when I fust rode a hoss but I'll say 'twas befo' I was three yeahs, old, 'cause I can rec'lect pullin' a hoss over to a mesquite bush so's I could crawl on when I was so small I couldn't carry anything very heavy. C.12 [????] 2 By the time I was six, I was ridin' ever' yearling I could catch wid a rope. I was crazy to ride. I wanted to be ridin' 'round all de time. De main most reason 'hind de ridin' idea was dat I wanted to be lak my dad. His name was Frank Garrett, an' lotsa oldtimers will rec'lect him as bein' de best in de business in dat day and time.

“My dad was a [nacharal?] bo'n cow person. He had what was called 'cow sense'. Dat meant dat a man just had a nacheral hankerin' fo' dealin' wid critters, an' was bo'n wid de knowledge of how to go 'bout it. Ranchers f'om 'way 'round would send wild hosses to him dat had busted up one of dere men, to have my dad break him in. Tell you 'nother thing. You can go 'round as long as you lak, an' you'll never find a man dat ever saw Frank Garrett th'owed f'om da storm seat of a wild hoss, no matter how many men he's already kilt. Don't mean to be blowin' 'bout it, but I just wants to show you dat some folks am bo'n to be cow persons.

“Now, bein's I wanted to be a top hand lak my, dad was, I tried to do anything he did, an' worked right 'long did him w'en he was out wo'kin. I made a full time hand w'en I warnt any mo' dan 10 yeahs old. Just a striplin', but de culls of de striplin's in does days could outbest de average man of today. Co'se now, since I was so young. I done plum fo'got most all 'bout de old place dat happened w'en I was so young.

“I can rec'lect havin' de roundups in de spring an' fall, an' how de cow punchers f'om roundabout gathered together so's 3 to have de roundup an' all wo'k together, den 'vide

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de critters to each man, 'cordin' to de brands. 'Twarnt so hard to 'cide on who de critters b'longed to 'cause dey am all branded wid dis brand an' dat. De calves follered day mammies an' day mammies have dey brand, so de calf am branded de same as de mammy. Ever' roundup have some strays f'om some ranch 'way off 'cause 'twas trail drives come through Fort Worth, and de strays have drapped [cuter?] de drives.

“To show you how cattlemen done tudder in dose days, w'en a critter was found wid a strange brand, dat critter am drove to de markets wid tudder critters, sold, an' de money [?] to de man whose brand registered in de capitol.

“I seen sev'al trail drives dat come through Fort Worth w'en I was a kid. De drives am 'bout fo' to five miles long if dey am any size a-tall, an' am headed to'ards de Eastern markets. [?] drives am usual headed to [Aberlene?], or tudder big markets. 'Twas rare fo' a drive to be headed to Chicago, but sev'al even went dere. De way I picks up dis fo'mation am w'en de drivers talks to tudder cow punchers while in town. Dey always stops an' tanks up on whiskey in de saloons down town, an' I stands 'roun' an' heahs de talk. Tudder thing 'bout de drives am dat dey don't turn out fo' no town nor city, 'stead, dey drives right on through town. De only place dey turns am fo' de fords on de rivers an' cricks, or to miss a hill to go through a valley. Sometimes, dey would have to go outer de way to git to a watah hoe fo' de critters. De chuck wagons would come through right behind de herd, 'twas interestin' to see dem, an' de covered wagons wid de s'plies wid 4 de chuck wagon.

“Tudder thing dat am interestin' to see, am de wagon trains dat comes through Fort Worth, an' headed to'ards some army post, or some tradin' post. 'Twas usually cow pokes dat drives de teams dat pulls de wagons in de trains. Some wagons am pulled by six-eight oxen, or six-eight pair of hosses. De hosses am lots faster dan de oxen, but don't pull so much stuff as a rule.

“Gittin' back to de Tandy Ranch, I shore wish we all could be back dere in de saddle right now 'cause 'twas sev'al real riders an' ropers dat wo'ked dere. 'Sides my dad, 'twas Ben

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Sanders, Henry Sanders, an' Joe Purvis, cullud fellows dat could ride most anything. Ben, Marster Calvin an' Marester [McDade?] em good riders an' crack shots. Dey could make a pistol talk, almost. Never saw den miss anything dey aimed at. Marster Calvin am de [ramrod?]. He runs de place for de Tandys. 'Twas sev'al mo' white fellows wo'ked dere, but been so long ago dat I've clear light fo'got dere names. Dey could ride, rope, an' shoot, too.

"Bout de hossed, 'twarnt no sho'tage of hosses. [?] all just went out on de plain an' keteched dem. On account of de plain, we couldn't pen 'em, so two-three fellows teams up, an' wo'ks togedder. See a wild hoss, all ride so's to get de hoss 'tween 'em [?] de hoss am sorta penned 'tween de riders, close in 'til one of 'em could drap a loop on it. If one am a good shot, he'd just crease de hoss. Creasin' am shootin' just above de neck an' numbin' de muscle dat runs 'long top de neck. [?] dat am done, de hoss draps lak he'd been pole-axed. He'd be out 5 fo' 'bout long 'enough to tie him up, den, w'en he comes to, we'd let him up wid a rider on him. Dat's w'en de rodeo'd come off. If de hoss am caught by pennin' him 'tween sev'al riders, an' am roped an' helt down by de ropes, one of de boys transfere a saddle f'om a tame hoss to de wild hoss, mounts, an' den de rodeo'd come off.

"Might [neah?] [all?] de hosses we ketched am wild Spanish hosses wid de long mane an' tail Dey sh' had plenty kick an' jump to 'em.

"Aftah I was 'bout 25 yeahs old, Fort Worth had growed a lot an' my dad had gone to makin' a livin' doin' nothin' but dealin' in stock, hosses an' mules. [?] good deal of de wo'k was in buyin' stallions an' so on, an' castratin' 'em to make 'em better stock. I quit de Tandys an' went wid dad. In de more dan five yeahs I was wid him, I guess I castrated ever'thing f'om a house cat to a stable stud. One hoss we castrated was a racin' hoss named 'Barn D. He was famous for winnin' de races, an' Marster Whitten owned him.

"Dad died w'en I was 31, so I quit de dealin' business an' took out fo' West Texas. I lit on de Triangle O Ranch, which run in Grosby em' [Bubbock?] countries. 'Twas a big-un, wid

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so many head of critters dat I b'lieve Marster Frank Cohen had to guess at de number he owned. I 'spect he had 30,000 or mo', an' let me tell you dat's many a critter, or anythin' else.

"De ranch am all fenced in, an' w'en you took to de fence row, you was always gone two-three days at a time. [?] all had to fetch a pack mule fo' de chuck wagon. De wo'k am mendin' fence breaks or anythin' else we [?] to does while out lak dat. 6 De food am beef, bacon, onions, an' a little coffee. If we all 'spicioned we might be out no' dam we figgered on, we'd take some jerk. Jerk am dried meat. 'Twas so dry in dat country dat it don't rain nine-ten months out de yeah. To make de jerks, cooky cuts de van'son, beef, or whatever he goin' use, an' hangs it out on a line in de air strips. De meat dries an' cooky hangs it up in de meat house. [?] we all wants any of it, we just goes to de meat house, an' gits as much as we figger we might need. [?] always toted a little in de chaps pocket to chew on, in case we gits hongry befo' time to make de dinner down. 'Twas fair chewin', even if I did lak tudder victnals better.

"Twarnt no cullud fellows 'captin' myself on de Triangle [?]. To be on dat place, you had to be a real rider; 'twarnt tudder kind 'cepted. Clyde Davis, Frank Smith, an' Will Donaldson some of de cow pokes I rec'lects. Dey am 'bout de highest pow'ed riders in amy man's country. Dey could ride an' shoot, an' rope lak rodeo actors. In fact, dey could shade most de rodeo perf'mors I ever saw.

"'Twas so dry out dere, a fellow had to be a good rider w'en de rainy, season sets in. De lighntnin' an' thunder storms am what'd set de critters goin' on a stompede in mighty she't ordah. I've read in de wild West Books 'bout de stompedes, an' let me tell you dat de real thing shades what a man can tell. Just figger out what'd you do if you was ketched out in f'ont of a stompedin' herd on a night dark as de ace of spades, an' de hoss you am ridin' had stumbled in a gopher hole an' you was on de ground as de next lump in de way. 7

"Seem lak I'm tellin' it mighty scary, but dat's just 'xactly what happened to Frank Smith on time, so I told. De way out was w'en lightnin' flashed, an' he made out some critters in f'ont

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of him. He already had his pistol in his mitts, so he blasted all he could see, an' kept firin' 'til de pistol am empty. 'Twas a break fo' him dat de critters he hit falls down an' slides right up 'til dey am in f'ont of him, an' tudders falls, an' dat makes a sorta fort, an' de herd on de stomp just goes 'round. I'd say he used his noggin, wouldn't you?. I believes ever' word of dat tale, 'cause I never saw any of dose fellows miss a shot, an' I saw 'em shoot plenty times at rattlers an' prairie chickens.

"Tudder thing causes stampedes an w'en 'twas extra dry season an' all de watah holes am all dried up. Ben, de hands have to make de 25-30 mile drive to watah. [?] de critters come in 'bout 12-15 miles of de watah an' de wind am right, dey can smell de watah, an' de thing aint made dat can hold 'em, den. If 'twas a big herd, an' we can't git 'em to millin' befor' de watah am reached, [?] 'twas a beef lose dat run into real money.

"[?] figgerin' on might be a stomp, de riders all totes sev'al extry lassos. [?] trick am in w'en de f'ont critter am hard to turn, rope him an' den try to pull him so he'll turn an' start de millin'. 'Twas only a trick rider dat could pull dat trick. It tool real ropin' knowledge to put it over, too. dat's why Marster [?] 'sisted on de good w'en it came to ridin' and ropin'. 'Twarnt just critters de boys roped, though. 8 "Dey don't think no mo' of ropin' a bear, or a wolf, dan I would ropin' a stick. I've heard lots times dat a bear would sit down an' pull de rope to him. Well, de riders dat knowed de business wont give time to sit down. Dey jerk an' jerk 'til de bear am off balance, an' den dey drags him 'til he aint so willin' to start trouble wid somebody. Many's de time I've seen a rider come draggin' a bear to de chuck wagon, an' have de cooky cut him up into steaks.

"I've had lotsa folks ast me 'bout de roundup business. I don't know how to 'splain It 'captin to say dat we all just scatters out to de far corners of de place, gathers ever' head we can find on de way to de place whar 'twas 'greed on to hold de critters fo' brandin' an' cuttin'. 'Twarnt no tudder ranch dat hold de roundups wid de Triangle C. Tudder ranches have rep'sen'tives at de main herd afteh de roundup [?] de critters all gathered. De rep'sen'tives he'ps brand an' so on, an' cut out, an' whatever am wanted, den dey cuts out dey critters

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fo' dey bosses, Day way, if'n any tudder critters strays onto de Triangle C place, dey can git 'em. Marster [?] done de same way wid de tudder owners.

“Lotsa [danger?] 'bout stampedes, an' 'twarnt to de old days, but in dis day an' time, too, 'cause I seen a stompede dis fall in West Texas. I was ridin' along wid some white fellows w'en we sees a herd make a rise over to our left. We stopped de car an' watched 'em, 'cause dey seemed to be goin' hell bent fo' 'lection. Dey come right on to'ards de fence, an' if'n we all had been 'bout 500 feet farther on, an' couldn't move de car, we 9 all would have been [?] flatter'n a flitter, 'cause dey just plowed on over de fence, just stomped it down. We all watched 'em 'til dey run plum outer sight, den drove on to Fort Worth.

“Well, guess dat's 'bout all dere is to de range business, 'cause I took tudder ways of makin' money since dere am lotas ways to beat de cow punchin' way of makin' money.